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## TAPESTRIES LENT BY KING ALFONSO OF SPAIN

THE King of Spain has shown his appreciation of the Hispanic Society of New York by a loan of twenty-six tapestries and carpets of Spanish make, eighteenth century, which have ornamented hitherto the walls of the Prado in Madrid. The exhibition held in March at the Hispanic Museum, New York, afforded a very welcome occasion of seeing tapestries that even visitors to Madrid are likely to overlook owing to the stronger attraction exercised by the old paintings preserved in the same art museum. This unusual attention on

Goya. They are paintings turned into tapestries rather than tapestries designed by master-weavers; they even lack the borders traditional in Flemish pieces; and while the designs reflect the influence of the French painters Watteau and Lancret, the picture rather than the decorative spirit of old tapestries—these pieces also reflect the course taken by the Gobelins in Paris from the time of Charles Le Brun onward. Goya, however, does not fail to give his own character to these scenes of dances and games and picnics in the open. His



"Sancho Panza Tossed at the Inn" Tapestry Lent the Hispanic Society by King Alfonso of Spain

the part of the king must be considered as an acknowledgment of the fact that America is doing more than any European country to keep the memory of Spanish literature and art alive with the wonderful old Spanish library in New York, the Hispanic Museum and the *Revue Hispanique* published chiefly in French, printed in Paris, but controlled from New York. During April the collection graced the Albright Gallery in Buffalo and other American cities will be favored later.

Many of the tapestries were woven about the time of our Revolution from cartoons supplied by

use of a single wind-bent tree leaning across the sky above the figures is a peculiar note in composition. In "The Earthenware Stall"—meaning a group of women seated on a carpet in the open air with crockery dishes before them—one can study the "coach of quality" and observe how three lackeys managed to keep their footing on the rumble behind the coach body. "The Kite" shows men rather than boys at the game—doubtless as true to life in Madrid a hundred and fifty years ago as it is to-day in China. In fact these Goya designs, however, to our stricter ideas, they seem unsuited

to woven work, contain a number of characteristic scenes from Spanish life.

The Don Quixote series, of which there are six, are from designs by Andrea Procaccini (1671-1734) an Italian who took charge of the Spanish King's art in 1720. He was a pupil of Maratti. The weavers were the sons of a Fleming called Jacob Stuick van der Goten who conducted the royal tapestry works in Madrid. We show on the preceding page the scene where Sancho Panza is tossed in a

the lion looking out of the open door of his cage; to the right Don Quixote charges his fancied foes. On the lower border are pigs, a cat, flowers and figures alluding to the scenes in the caballero's adventures.

The other reproduction on this page is a Flemish scene of a wedding before a little country chapel in which various types of peasants are caricatured a bit in the fashion of Dutch painters of the Seventeenth Century. The priest stands on the



"A Village Wedding": Tapestry Lent the Hispanic Society by King Alfonso of Spain

blanket by the merry and irreverent folk of the inn while Don Quixote looks on at the plight of his squire as he sits his Rosinante beyond the wall. Observe the curious borders of a rococo style, part architectural in the side borders like pillars with mixed capitals and part old Flemish with masses of flowers on the shafts. The legend is placed overhead on the leaves of an open book supported by two female *genii*; the one carrying a trumpet looks down and laughs, the other hides her eyes with her drapery and pretends to weep. To the left is

steps of the little shrine and the contracting parties join hands before him. Note the "owl hole" in the gable of the roof of the chapel by which that sly bird was admitted to the interior to wage war on church mice; also the dwarf at the table in the rear waiting for the feast to begin and the barrels dishes, jugs, vats and benches that indicate the neighborhood of a country inn. Other tapestries are direct copies of Flemish and Dutch pictures, some of them undoubtedly painted in Spain for the weavers of the King.